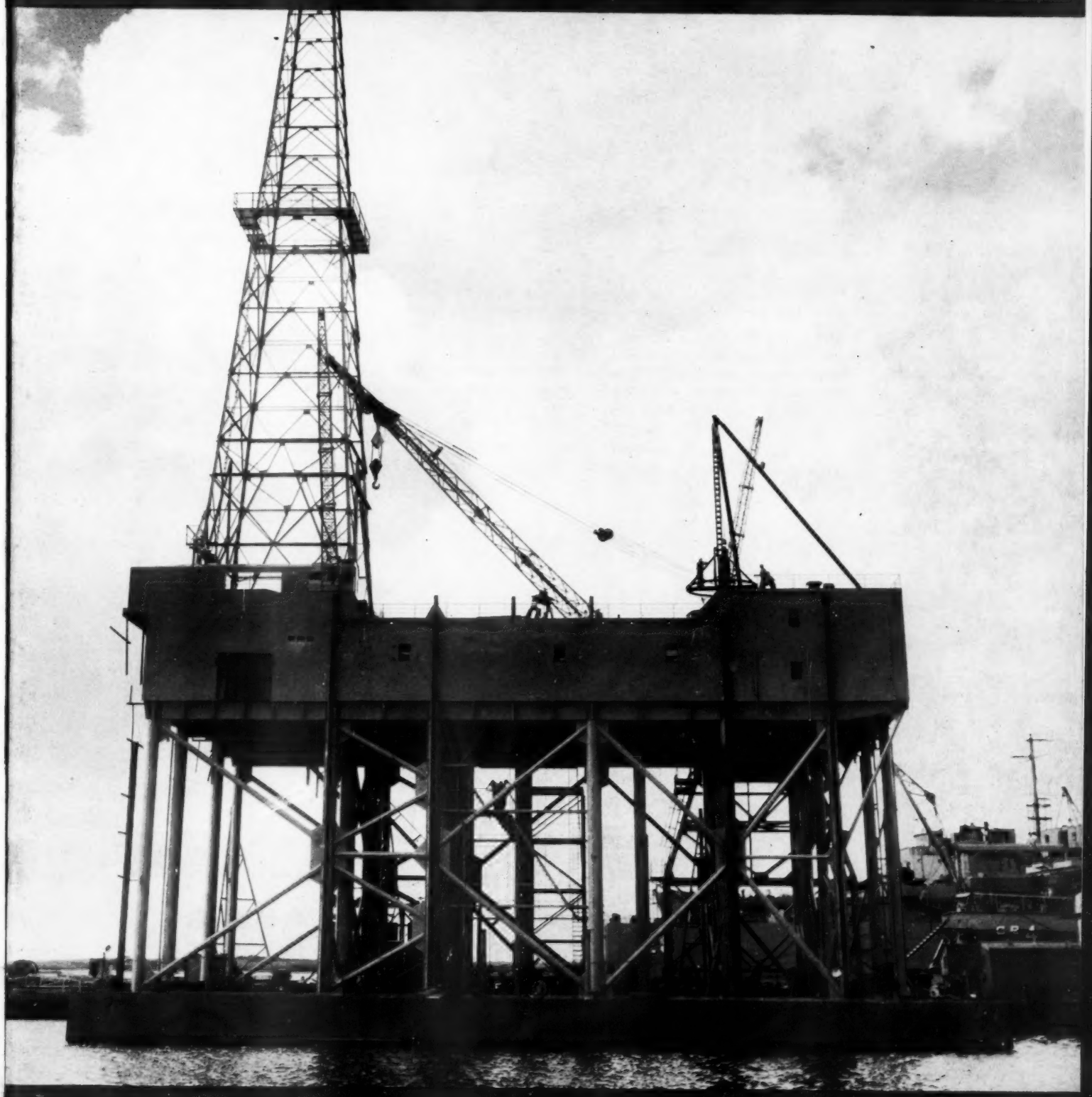
OFFSHORE OPERATIONS

Exploration • Production • Transportation



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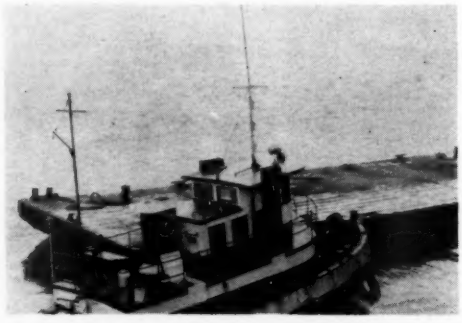

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PLAQUEMINES PARISH BOAT SERVICE, INC.

Douglas Maginnis & Loys J. North
Business Managers

Phone Buras 6477 Venice, La.

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OFFSHORE OPERATIONS

"DRILLING ANYWHERE OVER WATER"

Vol. 1 NOVEMBER, 1954 No. 3

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Cover: Kermac's Rig 44
Photo courtesy Ingalls Shipbuilding Corp.
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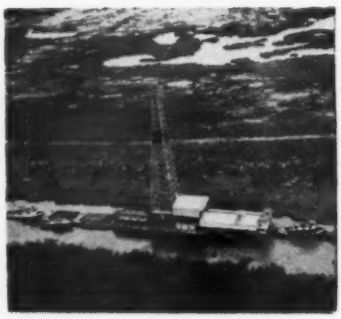

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- Water Barges
- Drilling Barge Moving
- Diesel fuel delivery to drilling barges and drilling locations

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The Boll Weevil Sez:

WELL, we did it! Put together a dad-blamed issue of this magazine in which nobody has found an error. Not even a fly speck!

You'd think we could sort of rest on our laurels or hip pockets or something. Maybe court a blonde or buy a bigger hat. Instead, we get a big horse laugh from a subscriber.

It seems that in our first issue —we still turn slightly pale when it's mentioned—we had an ad on the back cover. It carried the name and description of a Sewart Seacraft, the **Challenger.** And the pictures were of one of the sleekest boats you ever laid eyes on.

Only it wasn't the **Challenger.** It was the **Calcutta.**

Now, some of you peckerwoods might think we'd been caught out on a limb and that the fellow with the chopping-ax stood handy.

T'ain't so!

We've just figured out a whole new approach to advertising. We can wax lyrical about blowout preventers, for instance—and run a picture of the Fiji Islands. Or enthuse about a boat and run the picture of Marilyn.

You know of a trimmer craft?

Honest, Fred—it wasn't a mistake. We planned it that way. Now if you'll excuse me, while I step outside with the layout man and this length of rubber hose—

We might as well confess something else, too. Our dirty dollar bill drive was a flop.

There are extenuating circumstances, of course. We got stacks of money orders, checks and requests to "bill us in dupli-quadruple-triplicate"—but only six old wore-out dollar bills and thirty-five cents in hard cash!

The hard cash was for a single copy—gent must have believed us when we said this was a rag.

The first two greenbacks were from D. M. Engle, with Sinclair in Corpus Christi, for a year's subscription.

We are tickled pink over the reception OFFSHORE OPERATIONS is getting. Frankly, we hadn't dared hope there would be such tremendous reader response. We've been getting cards and letters from all over the country. Block subscriptions from as far away as California, Washington, Oregon and New York, and even a request from a Dutch oil company for copies to send abroad!

Makes us old clabber-headed country boys feel like Saturday night in the city . . .

You know, publishing this magazine comes under the things-we've-always-wanted-to-do-department.

We thought about it a long time. Then, one day, we just decided to back our ears and give it a try. Nothing to lose but our shirt—and with the reception you've given us, we may even hang on to that!

But until then it's been another of our "crazy" ideas. Like drilling for oil—six dry holes—or that Caribbean cruise scheme Joe Small and I have been cussing around the past couple of years.

We've both kicked around the world a bit—but not nearly as much as we'd like to. After you've heard those trade winds whispering through palm fronds on a moonlit island shore, you've always got a hankering to go back. We figured there were other suckers—er—people like us, who'd like to loaf among the islands in the Carribean on a yacht, taking life easy. Up the anchor when the notion hits, dive for sunken treasure and that sort of thing.

Anyway, we started looking around for a boat to buy—ten bucks down and ten more when they caught us. Trouble was, the idea kept getting bigger, and more involved. We wound up eyeing a trim, rakish yacht that had been an admiral's flagship during the war and was only a city block long. Three hundred and thirty-three feet length overall, to be exact. It was a bargain, and conversion would only cost about $400 thousand.

We figured that if we carried 150 passengers . . .

But publishing this magazine packs enough excitement for two growing boys and a medium-sized man. We really get a kick out of it. Mail delivery is like stud poker with the deuces, one-eyed jacks and twin jokers wild. The dangest things show up!

So you can count on seeing our ugly faces around for a long time . . .

—Long John Latham

Offshore Outlook . . .

With only four companies currently drilling in Texas waters, tidelands' activities for the state have not reached boom proportions to match either Louisiana or California. But an upsurge of activity is expected. More and more companies are rushing plans to get in on the search for offshore Texas oil. Within a year, rapidly expanding drilling operations may give the state a record to equal, or surpass, that of Louisiana.

A deciding factor in the overall picture will undoubtably be the status of ownership of submerged lands lying off the coast of Louisiana. Conflicting claims caused the Interior Department to withdraw its offering of leases in the disputed area, but the controversy remains unsettled. Spokesmen for the Interior Department have emphasized that Federal ownership of the underwater lands involved has not been relinquished. At the same time, Louisiana still presses claim to control of the tidelands in places as far out as 35 miles.

The generally muddled situation will undoubtably be a strong deterrent to future drilling and development programs in the disputed area. A general slowdown of activities is, in fact, anticipated, unless the problem is worked out with more expediency that at present seems probable; and while a seven-man committee is currently attempting to iron out disagreements, it is widely believed in the industry that only a court case will bring about any final solution.

Texas, on the other hand, foresees no such problem. New offshore tracts will be offered for lease by the state in December, and minor adjustments relative to leases overstretching the three-league limit in either direction are considered by state officials to be "routine." It is felt in Austin that proper surveys will eventually establish Texas' seaward boundary, without resort to either courts or controversy.

The same holds true of California. With the payment of more than $49 million to that state by the Interior Department, the question of ownership of California's oil-rich tidelands seems settled once and for all. While the Gulf Coast has held the spotlight in recent months, California leads both Texas and Louisiana combined in tidelands' production.

The whopping payment to the state represents royalties collected for oil and gas leases in the three-mile zone off the coast of California since 1947. Of this sum over $26 million had been received prior to 1950 and held in a special fund until released to the state by the Interior Department.

But regardless of local, national or international controversy, submerged lands lying adjacent to many continents of the world are being eyed speculatively by oilmen. Tremendous reserves of oil, and the future of the industry, may lie there. Marine oil fields of the world already hold vast promise.

To this beckoning frontier, the oil industry will inevitably be drawn. Offshore operations, in scope and size, are not overly large at present; but as the sea rigs venture off the shores of many continents, and into deeper and deeper waters, the picture will change. Now only a step-child of the industry, offshore operations may one day be the sprawling giant, with drill bits biting through formations overlain with water in the four corners of the world.

—Curt Bishop

Experience Tells—

Years of experience in designing and building work boats have paid off in the construction of the SEA EXPLORER — and in other "Creek" type boats such as the RED CREEK and BLUFF CREEK. Designed especially for offshore duty, these rugged 86-footers are being widely used for seismographic work both here and abroad. We offer you the same craftsmanship and "know how" in solving your boat problem. Consult us. We will be glad to quote you.

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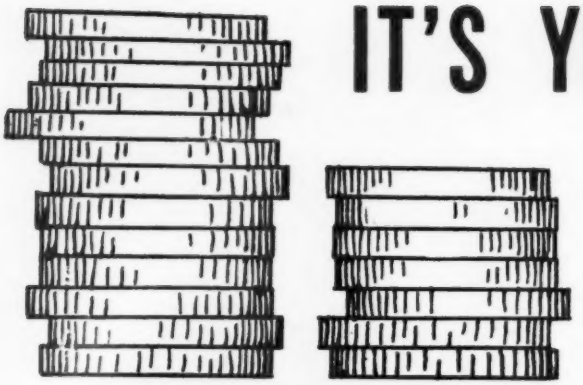

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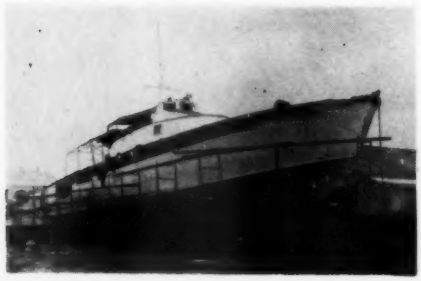
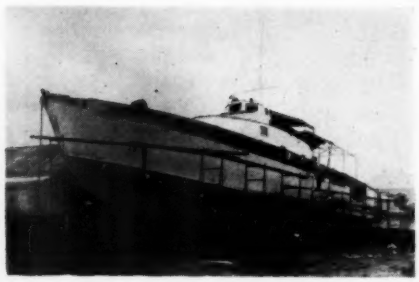




NO HIDDEN COSTS!

Harvey Gulf Marine Machine Shop

Drilling Barge Support . . .

May solve the problem of drilling in waters too deep for conventional type drilling barges and too shallow for the use of drill tenders

NEARING completion at the Levingston Shipbuilding Company's Orange, Texas yard is a drilling barge support. The unit measures 220' long x 72' wide x 40' deep. It was especially designed by, and built for, the Penrod Drilling Company of Shreveport, La.

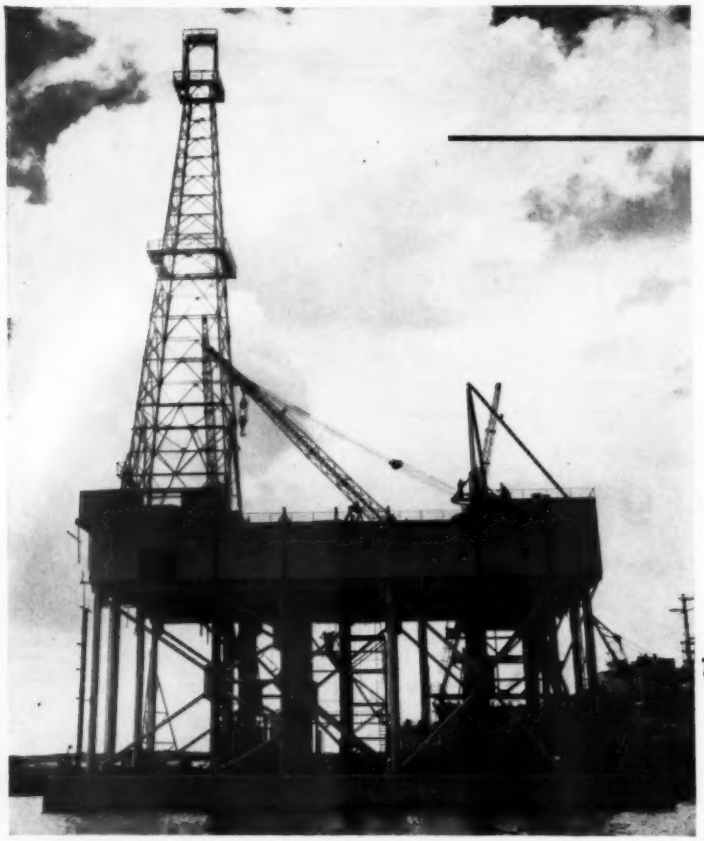
Of all-welded steel construction, the submersible type drilling barge support will be used by Penrod in the company's offshore operations, in water depths up to 35 feet. The structure will support an existing drilling barge so that the two units are integrated when put into operation. The giant support will be used for exploration in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico as soon as it is completed.

Arriving on location, with the drilling barge securely cradled within the wing walls, the unit will be submerged to the bottom and piling will be driven in the ocean's floor to keep it immobile. Should it become necessary to move the structure, the four pumps which are installed two in each wing wall will pump out the water and permit the structure to rise and be towed to the new location by tugs.

These pumps are Manistee 3060 gpm double suction pumps, each powered by a Louis Allis 40 hp, 230 volt D-C electric motor. In addition a deep well pump, having a capacity of 1200 gpm to provide circulating water for generators on the drilling barge while the structure is being moved to location, has been installed on the top of one of the wing walls.

Two 10-ton stiffleg derricks, complete with air hoists, have been installed on the wing walls for the loading of pipe, drilling mud, cement and supplies onto the drilling barge.

The drilling barge support is a new and novel approach to the problem of drilling in waters too deep for conventional type submersible drilling barges and too shallow to permit the use of drill tenders.



Seagoing Skyscraper

Kermac Rig 44, built by The Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation at its Pascagoula, Miss., yard, soon will join the multibillion-dollar search for oil in the Gulf tidelands.

The rig, towering more than 225 feet above the water at impressive commissioning ceremonies, was constructed for Kerr-McGee Oil Industries, Inc., Oklahoma City, pioneer in the development of the tidelands oil reserves.

This offshore submersible mobile drilling platform can work in water 40 feet deep. Among its modern facilities are air-conditioned crew quarters for 42 men.

THE INGALLS SHIPBUILDING CORPORATION

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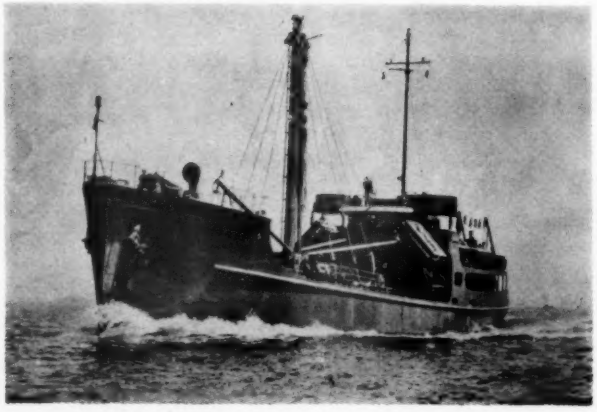
BHP:	1000
Cargo, Bale:	21,462 Cu. Ft.
Holds:	Two
Hatches:	2, 16' x 28' & 16' x 20'
Fuel Oil Cap.:	20,042 Gallons
Endurance:	4500 Miles @ 13 Knots
Number Screws:	Twin—2 Manganese Bronze Propellers, 4-Blade 72" Dia. x 78.4" Pitch
Propeller Speed:	246 RPM
Fresh Water Cap:	11,624 Gals. Normal 20,524 Gals. Emergency
Berthing:	5 Staterooms plus 16 Berths for Crew
Built:	1944
Builder:	Wheeler Shipbldg. Co.



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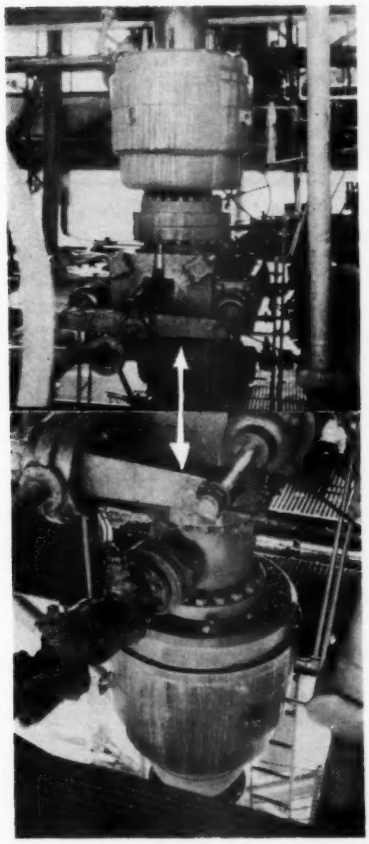
Blowout Protection For Offshore Operations

By Earl M. Daniels
The Hydril Company

- An insignificant "premium" protects a million-dollar investment
- Blowout protection is life protection on isolated "sea-going" rigs
- Blowout protection is pollution protection on offbeach locations
- The trend is toward multiple preventer hook-ups to meet any need
- Portable, packaged blowout control systems are available for production, workover and remedial work



This two-picture panel shows a typical blowout preventer hookup. Here two compressible cartridge-type preventers and one ram-type are used. Since it was impossible to get the entire installation in a single photo, the double arrow was inserted to show the relationship of the two pictures.

BLOWOUT protection systems are getting special attention from offshore operators — and for good reasons. Blowouts, critical in inshore drilling, can mean complete disaster on isolated platforms and barges at sea. Instant, automatic control is a key part of offshore programming, both from an economic and operational viewpoint.

Looking at offshore drilling in terms of cold, hard cash, a company has an ultra-expensive investment to protect. Not counting initial outlays for seismograph studies and exploration, it has been estimated that each offshore well will cost approximately a million dollars. This high cost can be easily understood when you add up the extras—living quarters for crews, machinery and equipment to operate sea-going facilities, special transportation costs, built-in supplementary equipment such as cementing, electrical logging and servicing units normally called in on a service basis by land-based rigs. Then, too, offshore operators can't afford to gamble with second-rate equipment. Shutdown time (at an estimated several thousand dollars per day) is crippling. This "first class" approach to equipment adds to the equity to be protected, and makes adequate blowout control more important than ever.

Crew safety . . . Whether the operation is island, platform-plus-tender, or self-contained floating unit, the restricted work area and isolation put special emphasis on safety measures. The obvious hazards to personnel of a blowout at sea makes blowout control means a number one consideration.

While equipment investment and operating safety are the big reasons for special attention to blowout prevention on tidelands projects, a third consideration has been introduced—pollution prevention on operations adjacent to beach communities. This factor has application in a well recently drilled off the shore of a popular beach resort, and undoubtedly will be an influence as more and more tidelands drilling is undertaken close to populated shorelines.

How offshore control differs . . . While the same technical considerations apply to inshore and offshore blowout prevention control, offshore operations give special emphasis to two things. First, due to the heavy equipment investment and special safety problem, offshore rigs cannot be content with systems considered adequate for inshore operations of similar size and depth. Second, due to confined quarters of offshore set-ups, greater stress must be given systems which contain protected remote stations.

Trend toward multiple units . . . Since indications are that offshore drilling will go deeper and deeper, with increasing pressure problems, blowout equipment for new barges and mobile marine units should generally be planned for greater control capacity. Even on today's moderate depth tidelands drilling, the most widely used hook-ups consist of three blowout preventers, combining both ram and compressible cartridge types. These offshore hook-ups use larger diameter preventers than comparable inshore rigs, to give an extra measure of protection and accommodate the more elaborate casing programs necessary to prevent washouts.

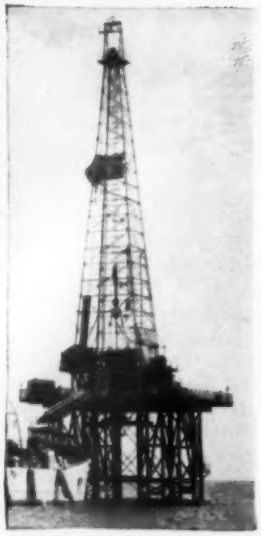
An example of this triple protection is shown in the photos and drawing accompanying this article (drawing on page 20). On this Bay Marchand operation, two Hydril Type "GK" 18-in. diameter blowout preventers are combined with a ram type preventer.

As wells go deeper below the ocean floor, additional preventers may be needed and as many as five may be hooked-up in a single system.

Larger sizes used . . . One important reason for the use of larger

(Continued on page 20)

Announcing...



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Kerr-McGee Commissions Rig 44

COMMISSIONING ceremonies were held for Kerr-McGee's two-million dollar Rig 44 recently (See OFFSHORE OPERATIONS, October 1954), and the giant unit will soon go on location in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Senator Robert S. Kerr, chairman of the Kermac board, was the featured speaker during the ceremonies, and introduced Mrs. William F. Baxter, wife of Kerr-McGee's division drilling superintendent in Morgan City, La., who was sponsor of the rig and performed the christening ritual.

Other speakers were Dean A. McGee, president of Kerr-McGee Oil industries, Inc., and Monro B. Lanier, president of the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation. Ingalls constructed the submersible mobile drilling platform, which was designed by Kermac's chief marine engineer, Paul Wolff.

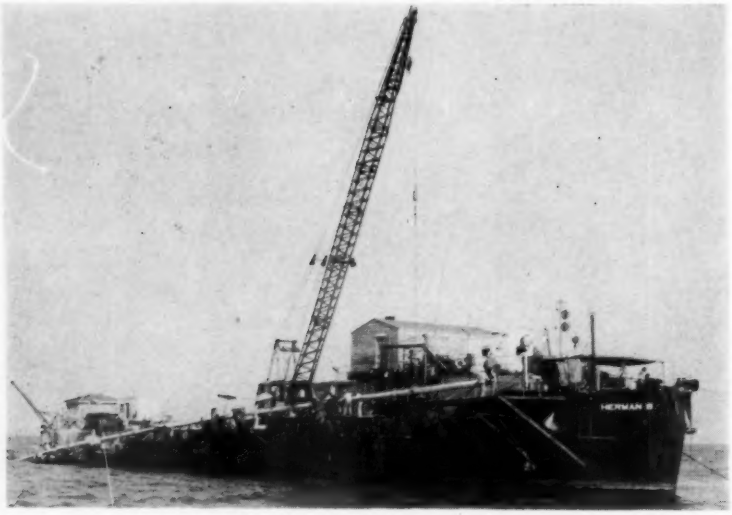
The unit was exhibited in towing position, floating on its all-welded hull and supporting pontoons. On location, the hull is flooded and sinks to the ocean floor.

The supporting pontoons are a special feature of Rig 44, designed and built especially for this platform from the experience the company has gained with Rig 40, another submersible drilling platform which Kermac has successfully operated since 1950 in water depths up to 24 feet.

The pontoons are attached to the main platform and hull through a slot and hydraulic ram arrangement. As the main hull is flooded and lowered, the pontoons maintain stability. When the main hull has reached the ocean floor, the pontoons are flooded and hydraulically driven down to the ocean floor and embedded in the mud.

Rig 44 will operate in water depths up to 40 feet, and because of its easy mobility, will open for economical development a much broader horizon of the continental shelf.

Top: Smashing the bottle of champagne to christen Rig 44 is Mrs. William F. Baxter. The gentlemen with their eyes closed are, from left to right, Dean A. McGee and Senator Robert S. Kerr, of Kerr-McGee Oil Industries; and Monro B. Lanier, president, and W. R. Guest, executive vice-president of the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corp. Above: Kerr-McGee brought in the first deep water offshore well to produce oil in commercial quantities—at this location of Terrebonne Parish, La.



Concrete Will Protect . . .

World's Longest Undersea Pipeline

PIPELINERS are laying the longest undersea pipeline in the world—48 miles of 12-in. line off the coast of Louisiana, to serve Block 126 of the Eugene Island field. To protect the line against the ravages of salt water and corrosion, the pipe is being pre-coated with concrete by Rosson-Richards, Inc. (of Louisiana).

Concrete coating has become an all important step in pipeline construction in the marine oil fields. Bare or "doped" pipe is short-lived in salt or brackish water, due to the corrosive qualities of the water and the destructive action of marine organisms. Concrete coating eliminates this hazard and also supplies weight to furnish the desired negative buoyancy, thus making possible the use of lighter weight pipe.

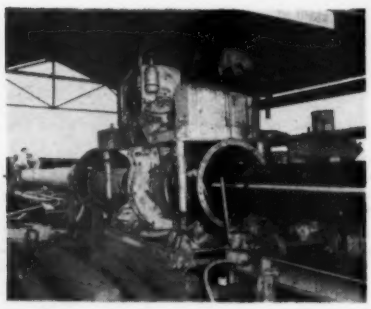
When the bare pipe is brought into Rosson-Richards' Harvey, La. yard, it is first cleaned, primed, given an enamel coating, and wrapped with fibre glass and felt. Then two "Wate-Kote" machines (company patented) mechanically apply a 1½" coating of concrete, with a density of 140 lbs. per cubic foot, to the 12¾" O.D. pipe at the rate of approximately 7,500 linear feet per day.

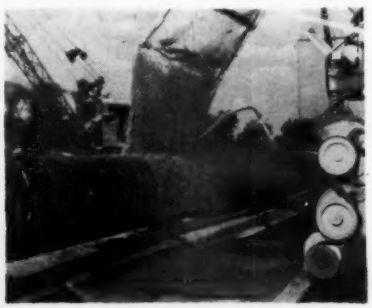
Each machine is capable of coating a 40-foot. joint of pipe in three minutes. With time consumed in handling the pipe, a machine turns out about 100 joints in an 8-hour day.

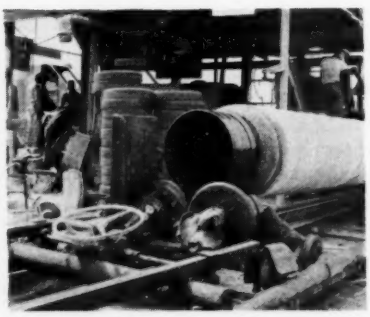
The concrete coating is reinforced with 1" x 18 gauge Keymesh galvanized wire. A chemical curing compound is sprayed on immediately after the concrete coating is applied, to seal in moisture and keep the concrete from drying too fast. The coating has a compressive strength of 3000 lbs. per square inch at seven days.

No unusual safeguards are necessary in subsequent handling of the pipe, beyond those normally employed with bare pipe. The joints are welded together on location, and the concrete coating extended over the weld area.

Rosson-Richards uses portable equipment that can be set up at any location desired. The Harvey plant can coat sufficient pipe for the entire 48-mile undersea line in approximately 30 days.







Left: The pipe is first cleaned and primed. Above: A 1½" coating of concrete, with a density of 140 lbs. per cubic foot, is mechanically applied to the pipe. The pipe, in this instance, is 20-in. Right: The finished product, showing the exposed ends of the Keymesh. Reinforcing wire is tied-in for field joints, made at the time the pipe is laid.

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JUJU PIPELINE

A reluctant high priest and a sacred lagoon add a bizarre note to this West African project

THE saga of the world's longest sea-unloading line reads like a tale from an adventure magazine.

The Collins Construction Co. of Port Lavaca, Texas teamed up with Taylor Woodrow Ltd. of London, England to lay the line for Socony Vacuum at Accra, on the Gold Coast of British West Africa. Natural hazards included a seven-foot surf, a rocky, boulder-studded underwater terrain, and primitive labor and transportation methods. But the two companies encountered still another difficulty—Juju and black magic.

Top: The pontoons march out to sea as two 1500 hp tugs, barely visible in the background, drag the pipe through the 7-foot surf. Below: The high priest of Accra.

Once a route through the undersea rocks and boulders had been selected, work was started on a launching site on shore. The 12-in. pipe was welded in 1400-ft. sections, and coated with bitumastic and concrete. The sections were to be welded together as they entered the water. To give the line proper buoyancy as it was dragged into the sea, pontoons were secured to the pipe at approximate 100-ft. intervals with steel bands similar to those used on heavy packing cases.

But before a single foot of pipe could be pulled into the raging surf, evil spirits residing in Kawli Gona had to be appeased.

The lagoon, with waters as black as ink and as slimy as the sewers that run unchecked into it, is sacred to the seven tribes that comprise the native population of Accra, a city of perhaps 100,000 population. The British spray surrounding sloughs and mud banks to kill mosquitos, but the lagoon remains untouched. Evil spirits reside there, and the natives feared that to lay a pipeline across the lagoon might somehow release them. But to use the undersea route selected, Collins and Woodrow Taylor would have to launch pipe across Kawli Gona.

After lengthy negotiations, the high priest was finally convinced that religious properties of the filthy water would not be contaminated, and gave his reluctant consent. But to appease the evil spirits of Kawli Gona, a cow was slaughtered and tribal ceremonies held, complete with throbbing African drums and leaping native dancers.

With local amenity restored, a a launchway was constructed across the 400-ft. wide lagoon. Fourteen 8 by 10-ft. timber cribs, filled with sand, were erected to support the rubber-tired launching units. An endless human conveyor, with each native balancing a pan of sand on his head, waded into the lagoon to fill the cribs. From the lagoon the launchway cut through a barrier of volcanic ash and sand separating it from the ocean, and then under one of the colony's main highways. To keep this deep ditch open against the leveling action of the tides

proved a herculean task.

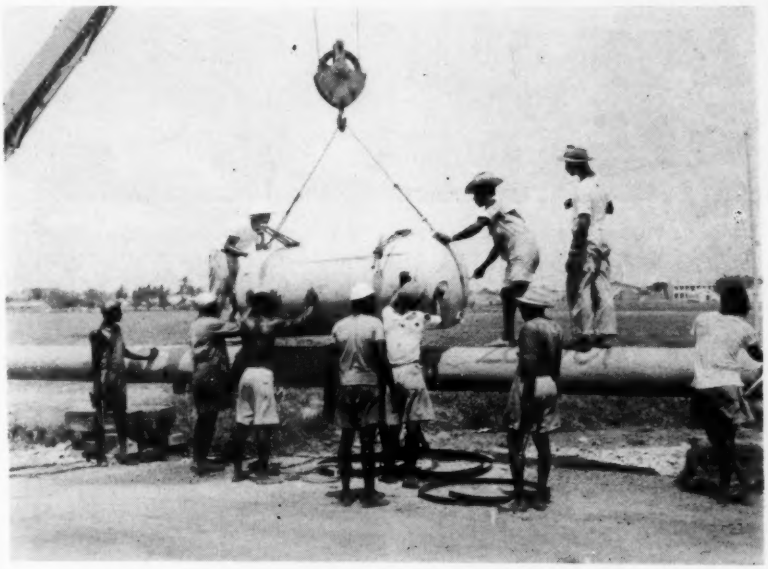
All rigging, ropes and trip cable were tied down with soft line, but this had to be replaced with galvanized wire because of the tremendous battering power of the surf. Sammy Collins, directing the operation, had planned to use two 1500 hp tugs to pull the pipe out to sea. Because of the rough surf and treacherous underwater conditions, the tugs could venture no closer than 2500 feet to shore. A native dugout manned by an 11-man crew dragged in a pilot line to which was attached the 8-in. hawser used in the actual pulling operation.

Accra has no harbor, and ships stand at sea while cargo is discharged and lightered ashore in dugouts. Native boatmen use a three-pronged paddle, and the vicious downward stroke of the paddle is designed to drive all evil spirits deeper into the sea. The natives also thought the champagne smashed on the pipe during launching ceremonies was wasted. In a mixture of Hawzi, Swahili, Accra and Pidgin English, they protested that the champagne should have been poured into the lagoon and the sea to further appease the evil spirits.

With the hawser attached to the pulling head, a single tug started the pipe through the rough surf into the sea. Natives led the pipe into the water, waving good-bye and shouting, "The pipe she for the sea one time!" When the midway point was reached, a second tug assisted in the pulling operation. Only four days elapsed from the time the first joint entered the water until the project was completed.

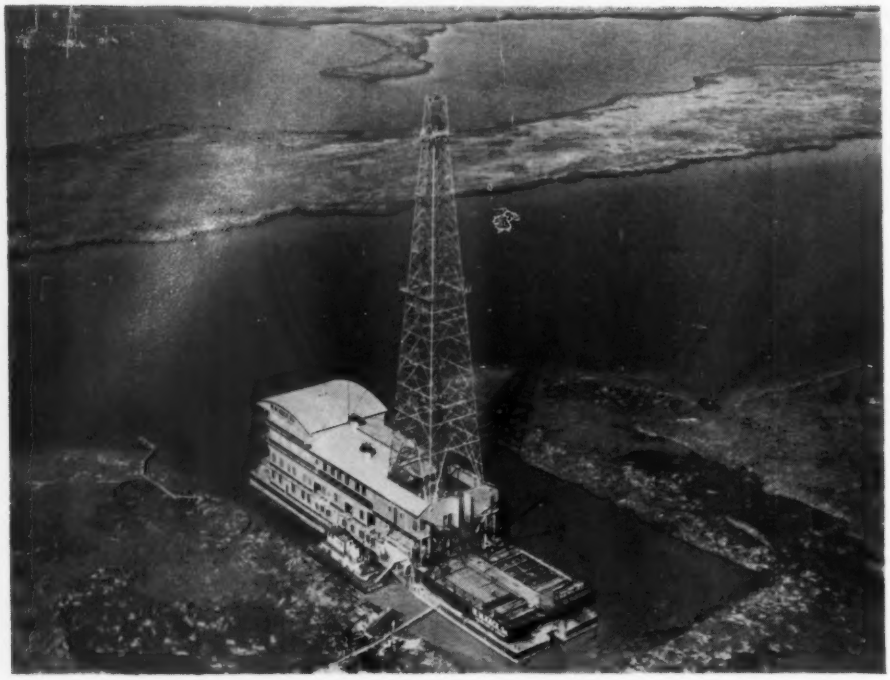
With the line in place, a releasing mechanism invented by Collins severed the steel bands clamping the pontoons to the pipe. As the pontoons broke the surface, they were gathered in by a Collins crew in a native surf boat. Divers removed the flanged pulling head and attached a high-pressure 8-in. rubber hose, suspended in the water by a buoy. The job was complete, and tankers tied to mooring buoys in 50-ft. of water could now pump gasoline and other petroleum products ashore.

The 11,500-ft. line is believed to be the longest sea-unloading pipeline in the world.



Top: With pulling operations about to begin, Sammy Collins gives an assistant last-minute instructions. Center: Lowering a pontoon into place. Bottom: A native dances to the throbbing beat of African drums during tribal ceremonies held to appease the evil spirits of Kawli Gona.

DRILLING BARGES... *One of a Series*



The W. M. KECK, SR.

SUPERIOR Oil Company's **W. M. Keck, Sr.** is the largest and most powerful drilling barge in the world. It measures 237′ x 54′ with a moulded depth of 14′ and a minimum draft of 4′ 6″. It has 5,160 bhp. The terrific concentration of horsepower makes it capable of drilling to depths beyond the capacity of existing drill pipe and control techniques.

Built by Levingston Shipbuilding Co. of Orange, Texas the **W. M. Keck, Sr.** is equipped with the world's tallest oilfield derrick, measuring 240′ from the main-deck footing to the top of the gin pole.

The drilling barge has four decks. On the main deck the principal machinery installation is the pump room, comprising two Ideal E-700 mud pumps shock-mounted on rubber pads. There is also an Ideal C-350 mud-mixing pump, fuel oil tanks, reserve mud tanks, small store rooms, ballast tanks, drinking and fresh water tanks, sand traps, active mud tanks and a slug tank.

On the second deck is a set of four Superior PDTG-8 supercharged diesels which drive the two mud pumps on the deck below, and the bulk mud storage hopper with 4,400 sack capacity, pipe-racks and crew change room.

On the third deck is the power end of the rig, rotary table, controls and auxiliary equipment. There are three main drawworks drive engines, all Superior PDTG-8's, which power the Ideal 160 main drawworks. As a standby there is an Ideal 130 PDT-6. The driller's station includes new improved designs and instrumentation, such as a micromatic feed-off for automatic drilling at rates up to 200 feet per hour and a Martin-Decker hoisting speed indicator which takes the guesswork out of pulling pipe in an open hole by providing direct reading of feet per minute.

There are 12 telephone stations which permits the driller to communicate readily with any member of his crew. A large dining room connects directly with the galley and pantry, and two walk-in refrigerators have capacity to feed the 40-man crew for a month.

Crew's quarters are partly on the third deck and partly on the fourth. The top deck has a spacious lounge for off-tour hours. Living quarters are air-conditioned and centrally heated.

The Harvey Canal Shipyard

Controlled Overhead=Customer Savings

THE Harvey Canal Shipyard & Machine Shop, of Harvey, La., is the oldest shipyard in the New Orleans area from the point of continuous operation; but under aggressive new management, it is also rated one of the most modern and well-equipped in the entire country.

Jack Donnaud, president and general manager, assumed direction of the shipyard's operation in 1951. Prior to that he had attended Southwest Louisiana Institute, at Lafayette, spent three years in the Navy as a first class shipfitter, and was discharged in 1946 as a chief petty officer. His experience in the ship repair business dates back to 1939.

Jack Donnaud

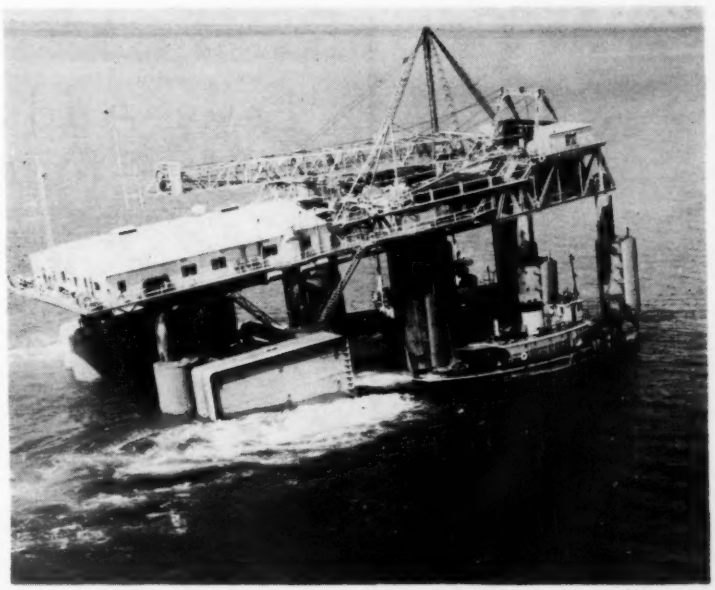
The Harvey Canal Shipyard & Machine Shop specializes in wood and steel repairs, and does only specialized construction. That the firm's work meets the most exacting requirements is exemplified by the contract it has held with the United States Coast Guard continuously since 1940. At the start of the Korean War, all personnel were given a security check, and the shipyard now installs secret equipment on Coast Guard vessels.

The shipyard does work for Kerr-McGee, Freeport Sulphur, the Texas Company, Gulf Oil & Refining Co. and other major oil companies in the area, as well. Its ways can handle barges up to 135′ in length, vessels up to 85′, or a maximum of 300 tons.

The shipyard also engages in salvage operations, for which it uses a 25-ton capacity floating crane.

Company personnel total about 40. Jack Donnaud purposely holds the size of his operations down, and the small, efficient force works as a tightly-integrated unit. In this manner, the Harvey Canal Shipyard & Machine Shop also holds to a rigid minimum the excessive overhead that goes with enlarged or expanded operations. The saving, states Mr. Donnaud, is passed on to the customer.

With the stepped-up tempo of offshore exploration, the maintenance and increased efficiency of auxiliary floating equipment is becoming more and more important. With its solid reputation for past service, the Harvey Canal Shipyard & Machine Shop can be counted on to do its part for the industry.



Ocean Drilling and Exploration Company's drill barge MR. CHARLIE goes down by the stern on location off the coast of Louisiana. The engines, mud pumps, generators and auxiliary equipment are in the submerged hull of the unit. The giant drilling barge is capable of operations in water depths up to 40 feet.

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New Robin Crew Boat Working for Magnolia

The Robin Boat Rental Service, of Harvey, La., recently launched a 51′ all-steel, twin-screw, diesel-powered crew boat, the **Erline,** which went into service with the Magnolia Petroleum Co. immediately after outfitting.

Designed and constructed by the Equitable Equipment Co. of New Orleans, and powered with two GM 6-110's developing 300 hp at 2,100 rpm, the **Erline** has a maximum speed of 23.4 mph and a cruising speed of 20 mph.

The **Erline** has a length over all of 51′ 4″, with a 14′ beam and a moulded depth of 7 feet. The draft when loaded is 3′ 9″ and the displacement is 54,000 lbs. Designed primarily to transport oilfield personnel to and from marine drilling locations, the **Erline** is outfitted on a par with the finest of pleasure craft. It is radar-equipped and can comfortably carry 40 passengers.

Although it incorporates many innovations, the new "Equity" 51′ Water Taxi has many of the time-proven features that go into all of Equitable's crew boats. The bottom of the vessel is metalized and the entire hull in and out has been sandblasted to remove mill scale and slag. The engines can be removed in a matter of hours and engine noise is kept to an absolute minimum; the engine compartment is insulated throughout with acoustic deadener. The **Erline** also features the advanced "Equity" type controls with heavy-duty cable developed by Equitable.

The **Erline** is No. 15 for Robin. The Harvey, La. firm also handles the rental and charter of seagoing tugs and rig tenders, and another 50′ crew boat—built by Sewart Seacraft, of Berwick, La.—will join the company's fleet in the near future.

Levy Adds Crew-Cargo Boat Built by Sewart

An 80′ crew-cargo boat, built for all-purpose work in the offshore oil fields, has been delivered to Arthur Levy of Berwick, La.

Built by Sewart Seacraft, Inc. of Berwick, the **Jerry** measures 80′ x 21′ x 11′ amidship and has a mean draft of 7 feet. Propulsion is furnished by two GM 6-110 diesel engines with a reduction ratio of 3.75:1. The hull has a 5/16″ shell and the house 10-gauge plating.

Built to transport crews, haul light supplies, and for towing, the **Jerry** has accommodations for six crew members above deck and twelve below. It has accommodations for 20 passengers. The vessel has hot and cold running water, showers, and a toilet on the main deck and one below.

Auxiliary equipment includes two 20 kw diesel-powered GM generators, 110-220 A-C, hydraulic steering with fingertip control, air clutch and throttle controls, ship-to-shore phone (RCA), and a hydraulic anchor winch. The galley is completely modern, with electric range, refrigerator and stainless steel sink.

Triple Screws Will Give 45' Crew Boat Extra Speed

Sewart Seacraft, Inc. of Berwick, La., has under construction for the George Engine Company of Harvey, La. a personnel transport incorporating a novel feature.

The 45' crew boat will be powered with three 6-71 GM diesel engines developing 600 hp at 1900 rpm and driving three propellers. The vessel is expected to have a minimum cruising speed of 25 mph.

There has long been a need for such a craft, capable of going anywhere offshore and yet keeping a small boat's speed. This is important not only in the transportation of oil field personnel to and from offshore locations, but also for supervisory use and emergency service. The fast, rugged triple-screw vessel is expected to answer this problem.

The experimental craft, now under construction at Sewart's Berwick, La. yard, measures 45' x 14' x 7'6". It will have a draft of 3'6". Reduction will be 2:1.

It is the first of six such vessels to be built for the George Engine Company. Sewart is also building four 50' crew boats for the Harvey, La. GM distributor.

Standard Erecting Second Platform Off Padre Island

Standard of Texas is erecting a second platform to further explore its new Quail Field in the Gulf of Mexico off Padre Island. The company reported three gas reservoirs tapped by the second directional well drilled from its first platform.

The second platform will be erected north of the existing unit. Four directional holes can be drilled from each platform.

Humble's Test Sets Depth Record for Texas Tidelands

The Humble Oil & Refining Company has drilled to 15,000 feet in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of St. Joseph's Island—the deepest well ever drilled in the Texas tidelands.

No information has been released on the well as yet.

Sun Makes Wildcat Location Off Coast of Padre Island

Sun Oil Company has made location for its No. 1-A State Tract 976, offshore Kleberg County, Texas, to enter the search for oil in the Gulf of Mexico.

Location is off the coast of Padre Island. Proposed depth is 8500 feet.

Monterey Has California Tidelands Oil Discovery

Monterey Oil Company has reported an oil discovery in the California tidelands. The No. 3 State Tract flowed at the rate of 300 bbls. daily through a 1/3"-choke from perforations at 5,906 feet.

Location is about a mile and a half from Seal Beach and four and a half miles southeast of Wilmington Field.

Magnolia To Test Miocene Sands With Gulf Wildcat

Magnolia Petroleum Co. has spudded its No. 1 State Tract 10 in the Gulf of Mexico, eight miles off the coast of Jefferson County, Texas—the company's first wildcat in the Texas tidelands. The well will test Magnolia's 11,520-acre tract leased from the state last December, and is projected to 13,000 feet to test Miocene sands.

In 1543 survivors of Hernando De Soto's expedition found oil on the surface of the water near the present location of Sabine, Texas. If Magnolia strikes oil, it may be the same "dark scum" used by the Spaniards over four hundred years ago to caulk their ships.

As many as five directional wells may be drilled from Magnolia's giant template-type platform, which stands in 35 feet of water. The platform deck towers 35 feet above the water, and measures 256' x 53'. Quarters for the crew are on a separate platform, connected to the main unit by a catwalk.

Magnolia paid $4,500,000 for the 11,520-acre lease.

Shell Has Second Pay In South Pass Block 28 Area

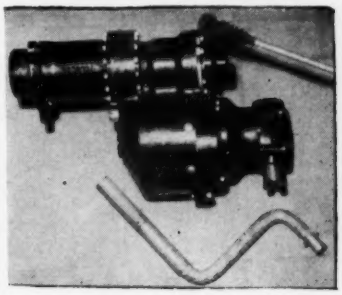
Drilling an offset to its No. 1 State Lease 1011, in the South Pass Black 27 area off the coast of Plaquemines Parish, La. in the Gulf of Mexico, Shell Oil Company made another oil discovery with its No. 1 State Lease 1012, Block 28.

The well flowed 215 bbls. of 31.9 gravity oil with 120,000 cubic ft. of gas daily on a 10/64-in. choke from 7,364-7,372 feet. Well No. 1 State Lease 1011 gauged 250 barrels with a gas-liquid ratio of 580 to 1.

Atlantic Abandons Offshore Plaquemines Parish Wildcat

The Atlantic Refining Company has abandoned the No. 1 State Lease 2362 in the Breton Sound Block 14 area off the coast of Plaquemines Parish, La. Total depth was 9,502 feet.

INERTIA STARTERS!



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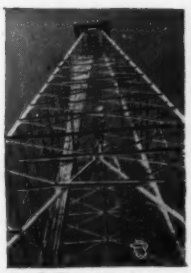

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Blowout Protection—

(Continued from page 9)

size blowout preventers offshore is that a conductor jacket must be run below the deepest piling structure to guard against washing out around the piling. This conductor is usually 26-in. O.D. Intermediate protective casing is often used below this conductor in addition to production casing. This multiplicity of casing sizes demands that larger capacity blowout preventers be used.

Basics of blowout control . . . It is rather well accepted that control of formation pressures falls in one of two categories, primary control and secondary control. Primary control is the function of the fluid column in a particular well. In the case of a drilling well, it is a column of rotary drilling fluid; in the case of a producing well, it is a column of static well fluid.

This primary control exerted by the fluid column is the most important single factor in blowout control. Whenever a fluid column of proper weight, density and viscosity is maintained, formation pressure will never be a threat to the safety of operations. However, the earth's complicated crust has produced so many variable conditions that often it becomes impossible to predict column requirements. In addition, what may be considered a sufficient volume of fluid can be swallowed almost instantly by a subsurface fissure or cavity. For this and other reasons, primary control may be deprived at the very time it is most urgently needed. Therefore, it becomes necessary to provide secondary control in the form of equipment systems which can deliver the Sunday punch to any of Nature's subterranean tricks.

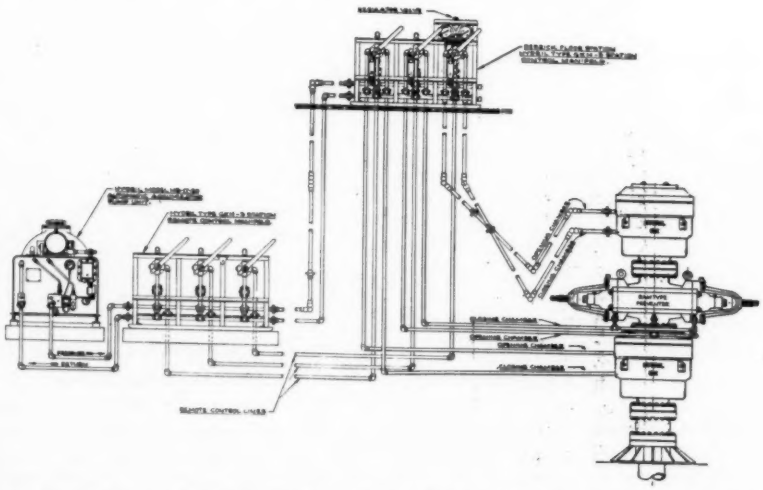
Keep pipe moving . . . It is essential that one of the well head blowout control units in the blowout prevention control system be capable of permitting rotation of drill pipe and stripping of tool joints under pressure. If it is possible to keep the drill pipe moving while the fluid column is being loaded to take over the job of blowout control, then the hazard of a stuck string of drill pipe is reduced and the likelihood of a long perilous fishing job is minimized. Not only are fishing jobs costly (particularly on $3,000-per-day offshore operations) but some require the use of explosive charges or the taxing to maximum capacity all components of the rig equipment. Far worse, drill pipe may be stuck by bridging in the hole above the high pressure horizon. When the bridge is broken and the pipe is free, the well may attempt to blow again.

Hydraulic pressure systems . . . Naturally, hydraulically-operated blowout prevention control systems require a source of hydraulic pressure. These fall into only a few categories. The simplest type can be a hand-operated core-pump or a small fluid pump operated mechanically. Another source of pressure is bottled nitrogen injected directly into the closing chamber, or against a hydraulic medium in the lines connected to blowout control equipment. The third, and preferred method, consists of hydro-pneumatic devices designed to automatically maintain a continuous supply of hydraulic fluid under predetermined pressure. On offshore drilling locations, it is generally recommended that a continuous, predetermined pressure be maintained in an accumulator and a secondary pressure source by pump or bottled nitrogen be available as an additional safeguard.

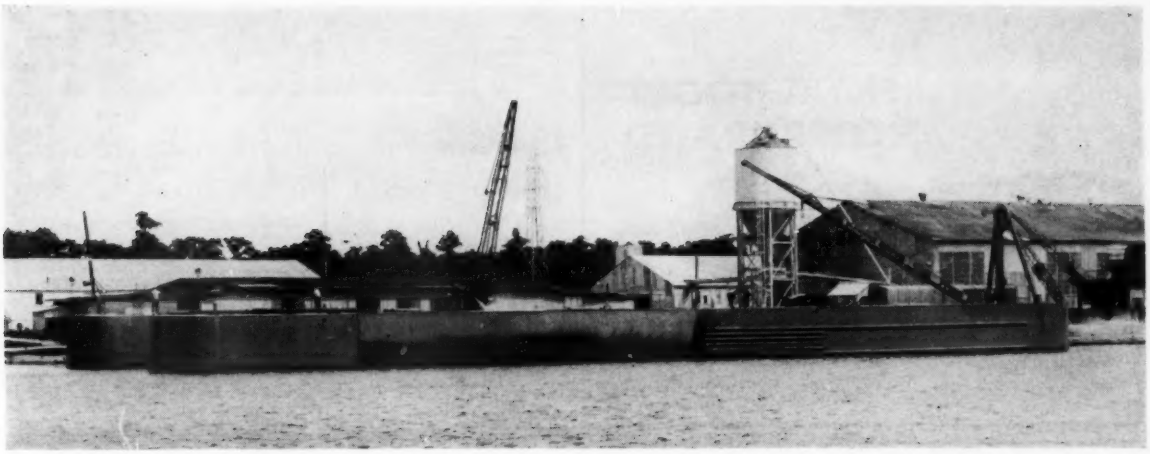
Control manifolds . . . In hydraulic systems, controls must be provided for directing fluid to the closing or opening of any of the elements of the blowout equipment system. These control manifolds are made up of the individual valves which are actuated to direct the closing or opening of control units on the well head. It is recommended, particularly on offshore installations, that dual control manifold stations be utilized, one on the rig floor and one at a properly-protected distance from the well bore. Such protection on remote stations should include a corrugated steel fire wall and an overhead water spray system. It is also important, where multiple control manifolds or stations are involved, that all be mechanically identical and operate in the same manner.

Blowout education . . . Just as lifeboat and emergency drills are part of shipboard routine, blowout equipment education and drills are essential to the safety of offshore stations. Nearly every member of the crew is interested in the draw works, the slush pump, the power slip and other major units of the drilling rig because these are units of equipment for which he hopes to be responsible as he climbs the ladder from roughneck to derrickman, to driller, to toolpusher. But the factor which keeps alive his interest in these tools is his everyday use of them. On the other hand, he may go for a long time without having emergency need for blowout control equipment. These relatively long periods of emergency-free operation lull his interst and attention. Regular practice blowout drills will make certain that each crew member will react instinctively and effectively in a crisis.

Packaged systems for production . . . One of the newest developments in blowout protection equipment is the portable, packaged system. These systems are compactly utilized, containing blowout preventer, automatic pump accumulator and manifold control in one easily-handled skid-mounted unit. These packaged systems are particularly adapted to offshore use, for production as well as servicing and remedial work.



Piping and operation means diagram for typical blowout preventer hookup as shown in photos on page 9.



A Progress Report . . .

American Tidelands Drilling Barge

A NEW submersible-type drilling barge, capable of operation in water depths up to 45 feet, is now under construction at the Alexander Shipyard in New Orleans, La. Designed by Alexander's engineers, the giant unit will be outfitted and ready for delivery to American Tidelands, Inc. in December.

The unit will be completely self-contained. Construction was started in March, and the barge hull has been completed and launched. The machinery deck and superstructure are being assembled in sections. Fabrication of the sections is being handled at both branches of the New Orleans shipyard. Final cost of construction will be about $2,000,000 according to Spencer Rowan, American Tidelands vice-president.

These giant cassions, 6′ in diameter and 52′ long, will tower above the hull to support the platform.

Dimensions . . . The hull of the new drilling barge measures 200′ x 74′ x 12′ deep. Sixteen cylindrical columns 6′ in diameter and 52′ in length tower above the hull to support the platform. The platform stands 64′ above the bottom of the hull, which means the machinery deck will be 19′ above water when the unit is operating at maximum depth.

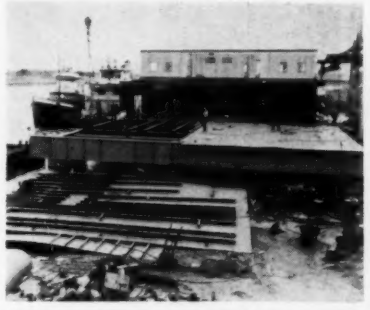
Superstructure . . . The platform measures 200′ x 72′, and comfortable air-conditioned quarters, recreation space and galley facilities will be provided for 40 men on the upper deck. The unit will be equipped with the latest in appliances—electric washer, dryer, cooking units and a walk-in freezer.

Machinery deck . . . On the lower level of the platform—the machinery deck—will be located the 5-engine compound, 2,000 hp rig, two 850 hp pumps, and 150 hp mud-mixing pump. The drawworks will be driven by two 800 hp electric motors, and a 142′ derrick with a 1,000,000 lb. capacity will be installed. Pipe-racks are located amidship.

Storage . . . All drill pipe, casing, mud pumps, cementing unit, active mud tanks, bulk mud and cement storage will be located on the drilling barge. The mud tanks have a capacity of 1,200 barrels of liquid drilling mud, and 4,800 sacks of reserve bulk mud. Storage facilities will be provided for 2,000 additional sacks of mud and 1,500 sacks of bulk cement. The barge will carry approximately 2500 barrels of drilling water and 500 barrels of potable water.

Organization . . . American Tidelands, Inc. was formed early this year to engage in contract drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. Company offices are located in the Balter Building, in New Orleans. Thomas Jordan, of New Orleans, is president of the company; Spencer Rowan, also of New Orleans, and Jack Carter of Houston are vice-presidents.

Tentative date for delivery of the firm's first offshore drilling barge has been set for December 22 of this year.



A view of the texas deck. Air-conditioned quarters, recreation space and galley facilities will be provided on the upper deck for 40 men.

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News from the
SERVICE COMPANIES

Service Organization Formed By Plaquemines Parish Boat Owners

BOAT owners of Louisiana's richest oil-producing parish have banded together to form a cooperative organization called Plaquemines Parish Boat Service, Inc. Headquarters for the new organization are in Venice, La. Officers of the corporation are:

John M. Friedmann, Venice, La., president; Paul Galmiche, Buras, La., first vice-president; Joseph J. Jurisich, Empire, La., second-vice-president; and Bercham J. Perez, New Orleans, secretary-treasurer.

Douglas Maginnis is the business manager, and Loys J. North is assistant business manager.

Plaquemines Parish is the major oil producing parish in Louisiana, and a great majority of this production is from fields in bays and offshore. Recent discoveries near the mouth of the Mississippi indicate tremendous offshore production and reserves. The parish leads the state in sulphur production, as well.

Realizing the growing importance of marine transportation in all phases of marsh and offshore operations, boat owners of the parish foresaw the need for an organization to coordinate activities on a local level, and insure continued good service to the industry as a whole. Plaquemines Parish Boat Service, Inc. is the result.

One of the prime reasons for the inception of this organization was to guarantee uniform charter and rental prices, as well as standardize insurance rates and provide adequate insurance coverage. From a long range viewpoint, the latter should provide a substantial savings to be passed on to the customer—the various oil companies operating in the area.

The organization will carry on its business like any corporation, and solicits all types of boat charter or boat rental. At present, there are approximately sixty members, representing ownership of 124 boats. These include crew boats, supply boats, exploration vessels, tugs and barges. Should the local boat owners be unable to supply the boat required, the corporation has on call for bare boat charter all types of vessels used in the marine oil fields or related businesses.

Formation of New Helicopter Transport Service Announced

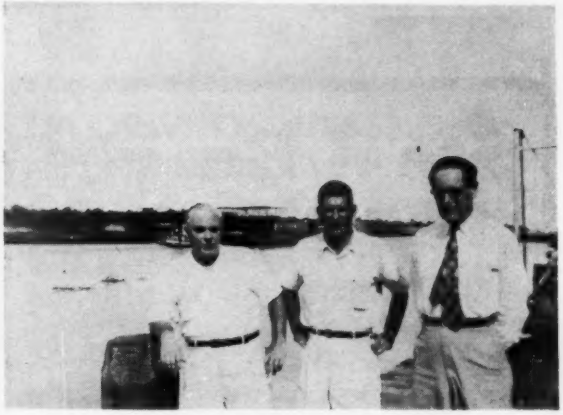
FORMATION of a new helicopter transport service, Coastal Helicopters, Inc., has been announced by Sam Sanders of New Orleans, president of the firm.

Utilizing a Bell Model 47 three-place helicopter, the company will engage in general transportation and exploration work anywhere along the Gulf Coast.

The helicopter has proved a handy tool to the oil industry in making seismic studies and surveys or running gravimeter tests in swamp areas or over difficult terrain. It is also becoming increasingly popular as a means of pumper and gauger transportation to offshore producing platforms, and for quick inspection tours by supervisory personnel to both producing platforms and drilling wells. Coastal Helicopters, Inc. was formed specifically to provide this type of service.

Lem McCoy, former marine pilot, has joined the firm as chief pilot.

The new marine catering service has dockside facilities on the Harvey Canal.



From left to right: Fred A. Alleman, president of the new firm; Pete Menge, vice-president; and G. P. "Hoppy" Hopkins, secretary-treasurer.

New Marine Catering Service

Harvey, La., firm will do contract feeding and housekeeping for oil companies operating offshore

A NEW marine catering service has been organized in Harvey, La. to do contract feeding and housekeeping for oil companies operating offshore.

The new company, Marine Catering Service, Inc., is located on Peters Road in Harvey, and has dockside facilities on the Harvey Canal. Fred A. Alleman is president, Pete Menge is vice-president, and G. P. "Hoppy" Hopkins is secretary-treasurer of the new firm.

Mr. Alleman points out that accelerated offshore activities has confronted the oil industry with a whole new set of problems, and the service his company offers is intended to solve the particular problem of maintaining large crews on or near marine drilling locations.

More men are required for a marine drilling operation than for a similar operation on land. The general practice is to house these larger crews on quarter boats, drill tenders, or on the drilling platforms or barges themselves. When an oil company considers the added personnel required, plus the amount of time a toolpusher must devote to numerous details unrelated to drilling, the cost of feeding and housekeeping at offshore locations is relatively high.

By specializing in this type of service, and utilizing trained personnel and selective buying methods, Marine Catering Service, Inc. can furnish the highest quality food at a lower cost and oil company employees are relieved of the added responsibility. With only two things to sell—food and service—the catering firm relies on efficiency and high standards to insure customer satisfaction.

In this connection, Marine Catering Service, Inc. has established certain rigid requirements for every job it undertakes. Only name brand foods are used. Fabricated meats are furnished on all jobs, and there is no "quarter" or "half" buying.

Since the proper selection of food is of primary importance, the firm has taken still another step to insure the quality of its contract feeding. It has long been Mr. Alleman's contention that if the ship chandler actively participated in a catering program, and benefitted from it, the program would be more effective. In practice, it has been proven that the food is better screened and of a higher quality.

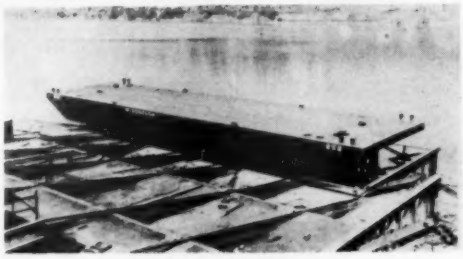
Officials of the company bring to their new enterprise many years of experience in the food and catering fields. Mr. Alleman has had three years of experience in catering to the marine oil industry, and was associated with the food business for many years before that. Mr. Menge has had four and one-half years of experience in the servicing of tug and tow boats on the Mississippi River and Intracoastal Canal. Mr. Hopkins has had eighteen years of experience in catering, principally for oil companies.

All personnel, cars and trucks are fully insured, with coverage applicable to each job. Caterer's liability is also furnished.

The first drilling platform built by Humble was this large, self-contained unit on Block 18, off Grande Isle, La. Platform "A" now has three oil wells and also serves as terminus for new gathering line.

Steel Barges For Charter

Oil — Deck — Water



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Industry Items . . .

A pipeline connection has been made to Standard of Texas' discovery well in Quail Field, off Padre Island, and Texas will soon get its first flow of oil from a deep water offshore well. Sun Oil Co. has production in the Caplen Field in waters of the Gulf adjacent to Bolivar Peninsula in Galveston County, Texas, but water depths are only 13 feet.

Sun drilled two wells directionally from land locations, bottoming under the Gulf, and in 1952 and 1953 drilled two more wells from locations approximately 2,500 feet from shore. But Standard of Texas is given credit for the first deep water tidelands discovery.

R. M. Dungan, formerly of Ventura, California, has been named division geologist for Continental Oil Company's marine department. He will be associated with Conoco's offshore operations. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, Mr. Dungan has been with Conoco since 1948, and was division geologist for the company in Ventura before his transfer to Houston.

Award of leases to qualified bidders in the Oct. 13 sale of 288 tracts in federal waters off the coast of Louisiana may be made by Nov. 1, it has been reliably reported. Speculation is that cash bonus offers for the leases may run as high as $100 million. A minimum bid of $15 per acre was required, and those granted leases must pay an annual rental or minimum royalty of $3 per acre for oil and gas lands and $2 per acre for sulphur lands. One hundred and eight tracts, totaling 523,000 acres, were offered for sulphur lease, but in some instances they contained areas also offered for oil and gas leasing.

A total of 288 tracts were offered for lease.

"Just what made you decide to give up the oil business and go in for art, Mr. Simpson?"

Gulf Abandons Million-Dollar Duster in Texas Tidelands

Gulf Oil Corporation has abandoned its wildcat on State Tract 794, about eight miles southeast of Aransas Pass, Texas, after drilling to 12,500 feet—and the Texas tidelands could chalk up another million dollar duster.

The first was drilled by the Stanolind Oil & Gas Co. earlier this year 24 miles east of Galveston in federal waters. But the cost was the same—about one million dollars.

Gulf paid a record $3,068,000 for the prize 5,760-acre lease just ten months ago. But the company isn't giving up the search for offshore oil, for it has moved a greater distance into the tidelands to stake another test. A company spokesman also emphasizes that the wildcat on Tract 794 is being "temporarily abandoned." The platform will remain in place, and a new platform is being erected for the second test. Piling is being driven and the platform deck will be assembled as soon as the job is completed.

The new location is several miles southeast of the abandoned well, and on another block. It is about two miles east of the field discovered off Padre Island by Standard of Texas. Standard now has two directional wells drilled from the same platform.

Four Majors Form New Combines In Search For Offshore Oil

Two new multi-million dollar combines, involving four major companies, have announced plans for tidelands exploration off the coasts of Texas and Louisiana.

The first group includes the Pure Oil Co., Sun Oil Co., Seaboard Oil Co. and the Ohio Oil Co. The four majors will operate in Gulf of Mexico waters adjacent to the Texas coast. Seismic operations are already underway.

Under a similar agreement, the same four companies plan an offshore leasing and drilling program off the Louisiana coast. Seismic operations are already underway there, as well.

Pure Oil Co. has made location for a wildcat in the Texas tidelands twelve miles off the coast of Galveston County, in a separate deal involving the Ohio Oil Co. and the Melben Oil Co. The combine has 27,000 acres under lease, with Pure holding a half interest.

A stationary structure will be used for the test, with a converted LST as a rig tender. The platform has been erected and rigging up is underway.

LeTourneau May Build Three Legged Offshore Drilling Barge

R. G. LeTourneau, Inc., of Longview, Texas, may construct a unique three-legged drilling barge, capable of drilling in water depths up to 100 feet, for the Zapata Oil Corp. of Midland, Texas.

If negotiations are successful and the barge is built, it will be Zapata's first venture into the search for offshore oil and the first test of LaTourneau's revolutionary concept of offshore drilling.

The barge will utilize three mammoth steel cassions, with giant circular steel "feet" on the bottom of each to provide stability. Twenty electric motors on each leg will raise the drilling platform to the desired height above the water after the upright cassions are sunk to the ocean's floor. Few other details concerning the LeTourneau barge have been released.

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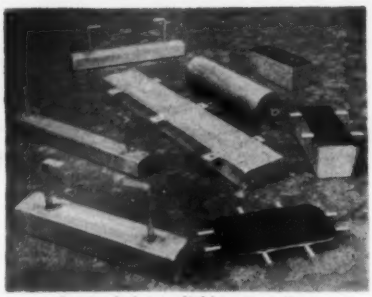

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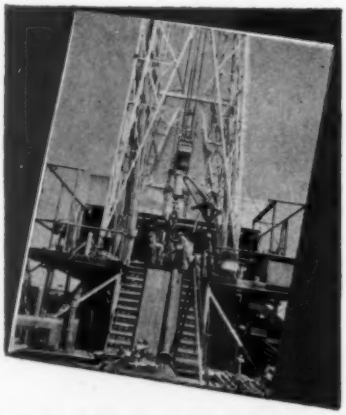

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The Slush Pit . . .

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Daughter: "Don't be ridiculous, mother. I went to his apartment. Let HIS mother worry!"

Want ad: Secretary wants position. No bad habits. Willing to learn.

A young lady got on a crowded bus. All the seats were taken, so she picked a kindly-looking gentleman and said: "Mister, I'm pregnant. Would you mind letting me have your seat?"

Hastily rising, he gave her the seat. Then, noting her slim figure, he asked how long she had been pregnant.

"About twenty minutes," she said. "And am I tired.!"

Advertisement: The women of the First ..... Church have cast off clothing of all kinds. Look them over in the basement any time this week.

Sportscast on girls' baseball game: "Everything was going fine for the local girls until the last half of the seventh inning when all the bags got loaded."

Not long ago, a certain oilman took his wife to the races. Just as the horses were lining up at the barrier, she frantically clutched his arm and asked if he had a pin. Then someone shouted, "They're off!" and she fainted.

"But, darling—we forgot to get married!"

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